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Trend employment growth in Australia continues to ease

Monthly trend employment growth in Australia eased further in May 2016, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

Over the past month, trend employment increased by 3,700 persons to 11,919,400 persons - a monthly growth rate of 0.03 per cent. This monthly growth rate was below the monthly average over the past 20 years (0.15 per cent), and down further from the recent peak of 0.26 per cent in September 2015.

"The latest Labour Force release shows continued growth in trend part-time employment with decreases in full-time employment," said General Manager of ABS' Macroeconomic Statistics Division, Bruce Hockman.

"This is the eleventh consecutive month with part-time employment increases of more than 10,000 persons; and fourth consecutive month with full-time employment decreases of more than 5,000 persons."

This is reflected in the trend monthly hours worked in all jobs series, which decreased by 2.3 million hours (0.1 per cent) to 1,632.1 million hours. Hours worked have decreased by 13.7 million hours (0.8 per cent) over the last 6 months, down from the high point at December 2015.

In looking at growth over the last year, trend employment increased by around 217,000 persons (an annual growth rate of 1.9 per cent). This was down from the annual employment growth of 298,000 persons (2.6 per cent) at December 2015.

The trend unemployment rate remained steady at 5.7 per cent. The participation rate also decreased 0.1 percentage points to 64.8 per cent.

"The trend underutilisation rate, which is a quarterly measure that includes both unemployment and underemployment, remained steady at 14.2 per cent. We have also seen the recent trends of increasing underemployment for males and decreasing underemployment for females continuing into May." Mr Hockman said.

"Trend series smooth the more volatile seasonally adjusted estimates and provide the best measure of the underlying behaviour of the labour market," Mr Hockman said.

The seasonally adjusted number of persons employed increased by 17,900 in May 2016. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for May 2016 remained unchanged at 5.7 per cent and the seasonally adjusted labour force participation rate was unchanged at 64.8 per cent.

More details are in the May 2016 issue of Labour Force, Australia ([cat. no. 6202.0](#)). In addition, further information, including regional labour market information, can be found in the upcoming May 2016 issue of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no.

6291.0.55.001), due for release on 23 June. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003), which includes employment by industry, is also due for release on 23 June.

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- Media requests and interviews - contact the ABS Communications Section on 1300 175 070 (8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri).
- The ABS produces trend estimates to provide a more reliable indicator of the underlying behaviour of the Labour Force series. Trend estimates were introduced into the Labour Force series in the mid 1980s and are available back to February 1978. Trend estimates are considered the best indicators of the underlying behaviour in the labour market. See paragraphs 28 to 37 of the Explanatory Notes in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).
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